

INTEGRITY

25 Cents a Copy



"CHARITY DEALETH NOT PERVERSELY" ST. PAUL

July, 1950

Vol. 4, No. 9

Subject ~ Charity, Etc.

C O N T E N T S

EDITORIAL	- - - - -	1
HOW NICE, HOW SWEET, HOW EMPTY		
By N. A. KRAUSE	- - - - -	2
RELUCTANT HEROES		
By MARION MITCHELL STANCIOFF	- - - - -	11
BELOVED SONS AND DAUGHTERS		
By J. V. C.	- - - - -	18
LOVE OR BE DAMNED		
By DOROTHY DOHEN	- - - - -	20
THE COLOR OF A SOUL		
By HELEN CALDWELL	- - - - -	33
HIGH SCHOOL PROMS		
By ELAINE MALLEY	- - - - -	36
BOOK REVIEWS	- - - - -	43

INTEGRITY is published by lay Catholics and
dedicated to the task of discovering the new
synthesis of RELIGION and LIFE for our times.

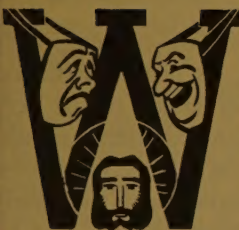
July 1950

Vol. 4, No. 9

Published monthly by Integrity Publishing Company, 243 East 36th Street,
New York 16, N. Y., MU 5-8125. Edited by Edward Willock and
Carol Jackson. Re-entered as Second Class Matter May 11,
1950 at the Post Office in New York, N. Y. under the
Act of March 3, 1879. All single copies 25¢ each;
yearly subscriptions: domestic \$3.00, Canadian
\$3.50, Foreign \$4.00.

INTEGRITY is indexed in *THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX*

EDITORIAL



WHEN Christianity first broke upon the scene it showed up very well against a background of muddle and myth. The sincere in those days found it no trouble at all to recognize the genuine article. Perhaps that is why they went so readily to the lions. The same clarity of distinction is not present today. Perhaps that is why we go so readily to the dogs.

Having had Christianity with us for so long, familiarity has bred contempt. Contemptible people have devised contemptible mores which they try to pass off to their own consciences (and to ours) as Christianity. As a general rule these home-made creeds look amazingly tempting. Even the elect are prone to purchase a few gold bricks.

The post-Christian era then is one of close distinctions. All that glitters is not gold. Mercy may be confused with mahem and charity may be mistaken for—well, read "How Nice, How Sweet, How Empty . . ." and N. A. Krause will explain fully. If you follow this up with Dorothy Dohen's "Love or Be Damned," the ability to detect fraud will grow in you and in your generation.

The students of Satan grow more astute as time goes on, and the latest creed is much more deceiving than the one before it. The bourgeois spirit with its emphasis on comfort and the easy way out, should not have fooled anyone, but it did. The new, brave ideology of grim asceticism, low-heeled shoes, infrequent bathing and proletarian inconveniences, looks much more like Christianity because it is *hard*. Mrs. Stancioff distinguishes between heroics and hysterics in "Reluctant Heroes." Christ emerges the Hero, not Don Quixote.

We hope our readers will discern in this treatment of a subject (the contrast of the genuine with the fake) a legitimate and effective teaching method. The enemy is a deceiver, a clown, and he is ruthless. Spotting this deception, and scanning the horizon for the genuinely good, true and beautiful is an editorial job that needs doing. It is *not* being negative. It is being on your toes in a day when Satan is at our heels.

THE EDITORS

We will mail a 4-page tabloid-size INTRODUCTION TO INTEGRITY, with cartoons and reprints from articles, free to anyone who might be interested in the magazine. Quantities also available to give away at meetings.

How Nice, How Sweet, How Empty...

There is perhaps no greater indictment of contemporary society than its monumental lack of charity, its near destruction of the true concept of charity, and its utter perversion of the very word itself. The world has not only mechanized men's minds, it has also crippled men's hearts. It has, in fact, largely replaced men's hearts with gold-plated incinerators wherein burn the lonely fires of self-esteem and the phony fires of sentimentality. It's no wonder that everyone has heartburn instead of Christian charity.

Saint Augustine says of charity, "No gift of God is more excellent than this. It is this alone which divides the children of the eternal kingdom from the children of damnation." Americans say of charity, "It's a shameful handout from the haves to the have-nots. We've got to be sure that we stay in the ranks of the haves so we won't be insulted with it, and heaven knows, we don't want to insult anyone else with it." It is a proud boast of most rugged individuals that they have never had to take any charity from anyone. It is not yet a proud boast that they never had to give any charity to anyone, because they are carefully surrounded by an organized structure of "charities" which salve their consciences for a price. But these organized charities are becoming so numerous that the average contributor is getting impatient with them, and when this structure falls away it will be possible to boast in complete honesty of a lack of any charity.

The saddest part of this madness is that none know what they are missing. The Godless insecurity produced by an industrialized civilization has driven everything from their minds but itself, and the commercial exploitation of all these isolated little selves has entrenched them further and further in thoughtless greed. They know they are missing something—such a great gain in their lives could not go unnoticed—but Americans have become involved in a towering artificial setup of "charity" that serves as a front for their better impulses, and primarily as a comfortable cushion against reality.

An important section of the government itself is organized for a huge charity—the foreign aid and relief programs which are operated with U. S. tax money. At least it is said to be charity, and to a certain extent it is, but there are always some motives involved other than the good of one's neighbor. Even though the Marshall Plan, ECA or what have you is being used to help American industries and of itself helps spread globally the American brand of industrialization, to give away billions of

ollars worth of goods does bespeak charitable impulses on the part of Americans. They are told by the State Department that they are charitable so they won't mind paying the taxes involved. The world is told by the State Department that they are charitable as an implementation of foreign policy. If there is any slip-up and the recipients of U. S. charity do not acknowledge the donors with a sufficient amount of grateful publicity, there is hell to pay from Congress on down to the grassroots. The worst indignity that can be suffered is that the recipient be not sufficiently aware of the identity of the donor.

Dear Hearts and Gen'rous People

Love of neighbor thus expressed through the government is usually open to question because so many citizens think of the recipients of such aid as lazy no-goods, troublemakers who do nothing but start wars that America has to get mixed up in, and poor unfortunates who are used to starvation anyhow, so why not let them alone. When the problem is brought close to home, say by the Displaced Persons, the attitude becomes a little clearer. After these homeless refugees get through all the red tape provided by reluctant lawmakers, they are apt to be faced by the average American attitude of "you ragged foreigners might take my job away from me, so why don't you go back where you came from!" When problems are plunked down in the backyard, charity evaporates. Its reasonably accurate facsimile can exist only in a big organization which is supported financially and grudgingly. Seldom before in history has a people been given such an opportunity to feed the hungry, ransom the captive and harbor the harborless. Yet "he who has the goods of this world and sees his brother in need and closes his heart to him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

Even a Congressional subcommittee reporting on failure to solve postwar refugee problems had to admit that people "must face these problems realistically and they must realize that contributing a sum of money, however large, to an international organization neither relieves them of their obligations nor constitutes a solution of the problem."

Christian charity requires a communion that is entirely lost by modern man, atomized and disintegrated and isolated as he is by the world's spirit of materialism. As he understands "charity," his creed would be: "If I should speak with the men of Poland and Pakistan, though I do not have charity, I have become a resounding success and a jingling symbol. And if I have profits and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I give all bull-

dozers so as to remove mountains, yet do not have charity, that is, nothing. And if I distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, we do not have charity, for that profits me nothing. . . . Charity is pleasant, is nice; if charity is distant, is not too expensive, keeps one's hands clean—if one can pay someone else to take care of one's obligations."

Men can no longer say as Peguy, "I recognize one Christian by his charity only, and it is that which comes directly from Jesus: it is the spiritual, temporal and constant communion with the poor, the weak and the oppressed."

With the local and national organizations, charity is usually fund-raising. Sometimes appeals are made on the basis of sentiment, using posters of winsome children with outstretched hands and tear-filled eyes, with maudlin slogans to whip up the contributors; with after-dinner speeches and team spirit to whip up the solicitors. More often than not the appeal is made on the basis of "help yourself by helping others." You contribute to the cancer fund because *you* might get cancer. You contribute to the orphanage because it keeps the kids off the streets, reduces the crime rate and so reduces *your* taxes. You contribute to the soup kitchen because soup satisfies the hunger of the "unemployables," and satisfied men won't become communists, and there won't be any danger of a revolution to upset *your* equilibrium. Whether you are inspired by the sentimental or the enlightened self-interest appeal, you may dig down and toss them a check, partly to get rid of them, partly to be a good citizen, partly because everybody is doing it and the social pressure is mounting (That's why they give you tags or buttons to wear—you have to contribute and get one to keep from being different from everybody else) partly because it takes care of your "charity" for another year or so. You seldom give because your brothers in Christ need your help. The idea that they are your brothers is even a little revolting sometimes. Whatever they are is immaterial to you.

Open Door for Do-Gooders

Since the Christian is so apathetic to social responsibilities requiring Christian charity, his place is often taken by the well-meaning do-gooder who denies God, but who feels sorry for his fellow men and envisions a Utopia where everyone will eventually enjoy three quarts of milk a day and all the comic books he can read. It is a great tragedy that Christians should leave their primary work to such people by default, for since it is true, as Saint John says, that anyone who says "I love God," and hates his brother, is a liar; then it is likewise true that anyone who says

I love my brother," and hates God, is likewise a liar. For "love is from God. And everyone who loves is born of God, and knows God."

It is especially such people as these who fight vociferously for the rights of persecuted minorities—the Jews, the Negroes—while many, many Christians sit about, having done their good deeds by contributing to the Community Fund, and if they do not actively hate their Negro and Jewish neighbors, they manage to ignore their plight. A man once asked Christ, "Who is my neighbor?" Today, although quiz programs are rampant, an amazing proportion of Christians would not even bother to ask this fundamental question, let alone consider an answer.

How did men get so far removed from the flesh and blood world and from the reality of a charity that is Love? Charity first went out of their immediate personal lives, because it could not flourish among dehumanized cogs in a machine. Relations between man and man deteriorated. Love was equated with weakness, and any kind of weakness meant a lack of success. Men were self-made, self-sufficient. They didn't know the love of God; they didn't need the love of men. Men lost contact with God and with each other.

Deprived of the real charity which is a giving of themselves to others, and needing love, they gradually produced a workable surface setup which provided them with a pseudo-love for themselves and either a hard-headed, utilitarian or a mush-headed, sentimental "love" of others. Here is lived the Gospel according to Dale Carnegie, the poor man's Machiavelli. This salesman's Messiah, whose prescription for winning friends, "the most popular non-fiction work of our time," went through fifty-six printings in twelve years, gives Americans exactly what they want—six ways to make people like them, nine ways to change people without giving offense or arousing resentment. Smile, lie, remember the poor guy's name, never criticize or argue—and he is your friend; he likes you and you may use him any way you are able.

Organized friendship is an obsession. This galaxy of Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, lodges, fraternities, etc., is an indisputably exclusive feature of American life. Whether the club is made up of war veterans, or business men, or middle-aged women, its primary function is to dispel loneliness by organizing emptiness and to give the impression that you are a good guy and everyone loves you. Good will and camaraderie and "service" abound. Yet it is not uncommon for an American to come home after a gala evening with his fellow club members, his friends, and go out in

the garage and blow his head off because of some pressing personal problem which no one knew of—which his “friends” could never come close to discussing with him because the contact was merely a superficial device fostered as a noisy escape from themselves and their frightening emptiness.

It is most revealing that when some poor unfortunate driven to distraction by the world climbs out on a window ledge on the fifteenth floor and prepares to jump, all the good-hearted onlookers try to persuade him he still has reason to live by calling to him, “Don’t jump—we’re your friends.” They know the term, and they somehow sense the tragedy of its great absence, but they have lost the genuine love involved.

“Friendship” and “friendly” are words that have sunk in meaning about as low as “charity.” This is your friendly meat market. This is your friendly newscaster. This is your friendly soap flake. This is your friendly sweatshop and your friendly employer. Buy our butter and eggs because we’re your friends.

And the word “love” no longer means the exercise of “constant mutual charity among yourselves.” It is equated with men’s sensual appetites and desires. I love that little blue dress. I love steak and french fries. I love Clark Gable. There are “love” affairs, “love” songs, “love” stories, etc., to the depths of degradation.

Sentimental Journey by Calendar

To assure the populace that love and hope are still with Americans—and also to make a few nickels oftentimes—days, weeks and months are designated to promote the general sentimental welfare. Promotions ranging from Sweetest Day and Mother’s Day and Father’s Day to Love-Your-Neighbor Week and Let’s-Be-Kind-to-the-Blind Month (“Hire the Handicapped”), assure everyone periodically that their hearts are in the right place and everything is peachy keen. If there is any sentiment left over from these days and weeks and months, it is adequately disposed of by being lavished on dogs and cats that nobody else loves, or on some afflicted person, distant and nameless, whom the newspapers are slobbering over. Out of such seemingly harmless permutations of pity come wierd concepts of man which in turn give rise to euthanasia, birth control, etc. The intelligentsia, who might calmly push a man with a broken leg out of their way, now take enthusiastic delight in the curious ideas, say of Albert Schweitzer, the famed missionary and philosopher who goes out of his way in order not to step on an ant. Such things are possible when Christian love is lost.

One of the most transparent devices which replaces love in the world today, a thing which, believe it or not, supplants to a great extent one of the corporal works of mercy—visiting the sick—is the greeting card. Instead of giving of ourselves and our time, we buy a card for a nickel or a quarter and dispatch it. Women are the peculiar prey of the greeting card industry. Their groups and clubs are continually keeping members happy and “loved” and remembered by mechanically setting up “secret pals” who remember the designated recipient on birthdays, Valentine’s Day, Christmas, etc., with a greeting card.

How the innocent little card usurps the function of human love, how it further removes personal contacts from life, and how it debases love into sentimentality are shown in this little tear-jerking ode, “I Am The Greeting Card” which is used in promotion by one large manufacturer of paper sweetness and light:

Preaching no creed or dogma, yet I count my faithful followers by millions. Having no tongue, yet I speak a universal language which all mankind understands. . . . Born of the love of humanity, I was reared with but one purpose: to serve mankind; serving one as I serve all, whether the king on his throne, the beggar on the street, the sufferer, the outcast, or the waif. . . . I minister to those who are in distress, and to each I give my best—for I am dedicated to love and service and friendliness. . . . I carry balm to the sick, hope to the hopeless, cheer to the cheerless, rest to the weary and courage to the faltering. . . . I mark happy milestones on the journey of life; I unite humanity in the bonds of friendship; I make new friends and keep old friends from forgetting. . . . I go where no other messenger can enter, reaching the very hearts of those to whom I am sent: creating good-will and friendliness, scattering sunshine, bringing warmth, comfort, peace. . . . For me, no road is too long, no journey too arduous, and neither snow nor rain nor heat nor night stays me from the swift completion of my appointed task. . . . I AM THE GREETING CARD.

Let us hope that we do not wait for our little greeting cards to unite humanity. Is it any wonder the world is so empty and despairing? People ask for love and they get greeting cards. When one’s immediate family, friends and acquaintances are treated with such “charity,” it is not hard to understand the difficulty of extending any love to the rest of humanity.

To re-establish personal relations in the charity of Christ, the first thing men must do is recognize the Fatherhood of God—that God is Love; that all love, charity, friendship come from God. They are not man-made, manufactured or conjured up by organizations. The only organization needed is the Mystical Body of Christ. “The more ardent the love that binds us to God and our divine Head, the closer we shall be united to each other in the bonds of charity.” From union with Christ in God, the Father, comes the true understanding of the nature of men which makes love and charity possible in the world. Men receive love from God and give it to their fellow men. This entails a complete reversal of the present inside-out arrangement. Men are not here to give glory to themselves, or to each other, but to give glory to God, and this is done by living with one another in love and in charity. Men were not made to creep about trying to get other men to love them because they are so lovable. God loves his human creatures, unworthy as they are, and through each He loves and serves all men. All are instruments of His love.

Once this basic concept of dependence and communion is established, all things in the human community follow from it. “Now one man behaves toward another, in serious matters, in two ways,” said Saint Thomas. “First, as being pleasant in his regard by becoming speech and deeds; and this belongs to a virtue which Aristotle calls *friendship*, and may be rendered *affability*. Secondly, one man behaves toward another by being frank with him, in words and deeds; and this belongs to another virtue which he calls *truthfulness*. For frankness is more akin to the reason than pleasure, and to serious matters more than to play.”

Behind the Goey Curtain

The greatest necessity in personal relations today is this virtue of frankness or truthfulness, and its restoration is a tremendously serious matter. Only this can tear down the false facades of organized friendship where everyone is “nice” to everyone else, not with the motive of helping the other but in the hope that the other will love him because he is so nice. By admonishing the sinner, instructing the ignorant, counselling the doubtful, one could cut through the goey curtain that separates everyone from reality. Just to be nice, most Americans have fallen into the habit of smiling vacuously and nodding happily every time someone tells them that he is living in adultery or that he just murdered his grandmother, because this keeps everything on an even keel. People act out the ghastliest lies in order to keep from “hurting other people’s feelings” when in all charity what the

people desperately need is the truth and anyone who can give it to them or help them find their way out of the current confusion in any way would be doing them the greatest act of charity. If rightly done in charity, this would involve a giving of self. "Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ." Now human beings have one thing to share which is peculiarly and uniquely their own—their problems and troubles growing out of their personal circumstances. To accept this gift from them of course involves a responsibility which most people shun.

The other fraud that must be replaced is the mechanical push-button heart exemplified so well by the sob stories in the newspapers and the radio announcers who rush out with signs that command the audience to laugh and applaud—all artificial channeling of emotions. But when Christians were commanded to "rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep," they were given a specific duty to perform as a personal act of charity and not enjoined to sit in an easy chair emoting over the tragedies and comedies of their neighbors presented to them vicariously for their entertainment and diversion. Men have the greatest tangle of mechanical communications ever conceived and count it a blessing that they can pick up a telephone and talk to some individual in Bangkok just like that, but real communication between persons has been shattered. There is a lack of communion among men, and as technical devices for communication multiply, communion diminishes. As minds must be told today to "THINK," so hearts must be told to "SMILE." Be 'happy' if it kills you—happiness is your Constitutional right.

The cool and proper, tight-lipped Anglo-Saxon and the gruff but sentimental Nordic who have set the temper and the tempo of America look askance at those Americans stemming from more demonstrative nationalities and races—the Italians and Negroes, for instance—who are open and free with their love, affectionate and unreserved. Any honest display of affection is looked upon either as a regettable weakness or an ill-bred mannerism. Yet an incomprehensibly vast outpouring of pornography and innuendo is countenanced to fill in the vacuum. No one bats an eye at this perversion of love that is flaunted day and night, left and right, for the kiddies, for their elders. This filth could co-exist with the surface "niceness" only in a cockeyed world ignorant of the love of God and the meaning of man's life.

Caught in the mechanics of organized friendship which waters down and sentimentalizes love, and in a stream of lust which perverts it, men soon become incapable of genuine, good

emotions which should have the sincerity and simplicity of the child along with the strength and depth of wisdom and experience. But only this holy love will break through the isolation and end the insane loneliness. As Saint Peter bade the earliest Christians, "Love one another heartily and intensely. For you have been reborn, not from corruptible seed but from incorruptible, through the word of God Who lives and abides forever."

If true relationships with God and with men could be established among individuals, charity would spread outward from there to the county orphan asylum, to the prison camps of Europe, to the ends of the earth—for that is the mysterious work of charity, to go out from men who receive it from God. Many artificially organized charities would fall under their own dead weight, the bureaucracy and testimonial dinners being replaced by the individual work of Christians who remember again the works of mercy to which they are ever called. Where widespread organizations must exist to do the work, not only would a truer spirit animate those who do the actual work; those who make the work possible by financial contributions would give not grudgingly and resignedly, but with real charity, an interest in the work, and a desire to help their suffering brothers in Christ. All acts of charity would culminate and be transformed in that sublime work of mercy which unites all men—prayer for the living and the dead.

Charity is far from dead. God would never allow His most precious gift to disappear from the face of the earth. "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." Men's mechanized hearts are not receptive and so charity takes a terrible beating. Certainly there are people today who have eluded the dead hand of the world and who live in the charity of Christ, serving all men as He desires. They are holding the fort till the rest of men quit kidding themselves with their inside-out existence and assume their God-given roles in creation.

"Every man who performs a free act affects the whole moral universe. If he gives a poor man a penny grudgingly that penny pierces the poor man's hand, falls, pierces the earth, bores holes in the sun, crushes the firmament, and compromises the universe . . . on the other hand a charitable act, an impulse of real pity sings for him the Divine praises from the time of Adam to the end of the ages; it cures the sick, consoles those in despair, calms storms, ransoms prisoners, converts the infidel and protects mankind."

N. A. KRAUSE

Reluctant Heroes

The priest we were talking with was a very simple, quiet little man. Since the war had "displaced" him he had been in many lands and seen many sad things. He was of the Eastern rite and a widower. His youngest boy had been killed in the back garden by a German bomb. His sister and brother-in-law, a priest too, had been deported to Siberia with their seven children. He himself had hidden in the woods for a time and when he went back to the village he found the priest from the next parish crucified on his cellar wall. He told it all in a simple, matter-of-fact way, then got onto the subject of children and how to bring them up. After some of the usual things had been said, the quiet little priest spoke thoughtfully: "I have only been in your country one year, but I have looked at your textbooks for schools, including Catholic ones. I have read your papers, listened to your radios, watched your movies. I am struck by one thing, very much struck. In no country that I know is the appeal to youth so meager." We gasped . . . "But surely, this is the land of youth! Everything here is done for the young, centered around the young? . . ." "No," he said firmly, "You occupy yourselves very much with youth, in a foolish way. You also occupy the young very much—in foolish ways. But you make no appeal to them. Young humans have great force in them for good and for bad. They want to feel their force used, but they do not know how. There is in them, as in all true men, a natural tendency to devotion and brave deeds and sacrifice. You do not suggest any use for this force and fervor but ball games or business. Why do your children stamp around in cowboy boots? Because cowboys have to be brave and they admire bravery. Why do youngsters pretend all the time to shoot and talk tough like gangsters? Because gangsters take risks and endure dangers. These are the only examples of courage held up to them. A great many youthful crimes are committed 'for the heck of it,' as a proof of daring. If they were given other heroes they would try to be like *them* instead." "I have never," the priest went on, "seen in any other country so little emphasis placed on heroism. This was not always the case. Your old history books glorified courageous men who suffered for their fellows. Their acts are still referred to in the books. They are no longer set up as examples to be followed. Now it isn't thought 'smart' to be too public-spirited. Some of your young people become heroes in spite of that, because of exceptional character combined with exceptional circumstances.

But heroism is never cultivated in them, or even proposed to them. So, many of these wonderful young people go to waste—unsatisfied and unsatisfactory. It is very sad for them. It is also very dangerous for the future of your country and the world.”

Conditioned Weakness

When I repeated the priest's remarks to the editors of INTEGRITY, they agreed that there was truth in them and said, “Write us an article on heroism.” So I who am afraid of almost everything am to write on heroism. I am by nature afraid of a number of things—traffic, cancer, bombs, operations, heights. I was by education taught to be afraid of a great many more—insects, burglars, Negroes, poverty, getting my feet wet, and endless others, all of which I no longer fear. I think most of my generation was brought up to be afraid of everything except God and sin. It was the typical bourgeois training of any time and of most Western countries. I say bourgeois advisedly, for there were, in those early years of this country and in the country where I lived, two classes less affected than my own by the materialist cult of cowardice. In England, the children of the aristocracy and of the aspirants thereto were still being educated in a rigorous tradition of honor and courage and public service which often bore remarkable fruits of heroism. It often failed to bear those fruits because this code, formerly rooted in the fine soil of Christian tradition had long since been transplanted to the stony ground of neo-pagan stoicism. The “perfect gentle knights” who defended the weak in the name of God too often became the “perfect gentlemen” who dispised the weak in the name of the Empire.

Another and larger class was spared the gospel of safety first. The poor, the “improvident poor,” frequently have astonishing courage. Sometimes it is the courage of faith. Frequently it is the courage of despair. Life itself forces courage on them. The rich can eliminate a certain number of hazards which are the staple fare of the poor. Like soldiers in war they are often bundled and pushed, willy-nilly into heroism, when all they ask is to live in peace.

Yet to live truly, to be a man at all, is almost of necessity to be a hero. The world itself in the sanskrit mother of our languages, was originally *vira*, which means, quite simply, *man*. Virility and heroism are of one root, virtue and heroism are indivisible from manhood. To be a man in the full sense, a man in the image of God, as he was meant to be in the beginning, is to be a hero. To live in a world of dangers and difficulties demands constant courage. And *courage* literally means *heart*, the very

essence and center of man. We are adjured in the Mass to have a high heart, to lift up our hearts—and therefore ourselves—to God, to renew our courage for the battles of life. Without this readiness to face difficulties we do not live. We just sneak through life and are not men at all. To live, in the full sense of the word, is therefore to live heroically, that is, as Our Lord promised His followers, abundantly.

History of Heroism

The idea of heroism has altered significantly through the ages. It has had its ups and downs. In the earliest concept we saw it identified with simple manliness. In Greek and Latin antiquity the hero was the exceptional man, the brave, outstanding leader of his people, posthumously deified by them. To the bravery integral to heroism, Christianity added the idea of love. For *sanctity* means *devotion*. The heroism of the saints was the supreme criterion of human value throughout the Middle Ages. No matter how much they might flout it in their acts it was the standard to which kings and rulers ultimately bowed, because it was the ideal to which every man, king or commoner, was urged and encouraged to aspire. In the intellectual chaos of the Renaissance the idea of heroism was divested of sanctity. Courage without heart being physically as well as philologically impossible, boldness soon degenerated into brutality. Nothing that has once been Christian can be dechristianized without becoming more evil than it was before Christianity had touched it. So the hero-worship of the post-Renaissance period produced not heroes of antiquity but monsters of individualism. It brought forth on the one hand the *condottiere* and tyrant princes glorified by Machiavelli, the superman of Nietzsche, and their spawn the *fuehrers* and dictators of today. On the other hand it bred the mighty pawn-brokers and merchant princes of an earlier time, the captains of industry and the magnates and tycoons whose bold gambles with the welfare of their fellow men are so much admired by our society. In the nineteenth century we find this typical opinion: "It would not do to have too many heroes and saints any more than an army of generals." By the twentieth century, we find mothers and nurses commonly exclaiming with horror in their voices: "Oh, but I want him to be a real boy, I'd just hate him to be a little saint!" Or the school-boy not daring to be kind and helpful for fear someone behind him might sneer, "little hero."

Whenever wealth rather than honor becomes the criterion of value, whenever the cry for comfort is louder than the voice of conscience, nations decay. Wealthy Croesus desiring to save his

over-rich Lydians from physical destruction advised Cyrus, his captor, to develop their love of ease and luxury, their bent for play and dancing and thus to sap any wish they might still have for their former freedom. Cyrus took the hint and by this soft device the Lydian kept its skin and was blotted from history. Today we already have a number of standards in common with the prosperous Lydians and may before long hanker to share their pleasant fate when ruder hands than Cyrus hold us in their grip.

Save in utterly wealth-besotted societies the natural respect for brave deeds remains constant, no matter how much local patterns of heroism may differ. Healthy nations have always held heroic examples up for emulation, only decaying nations shrug and sneer at them. Judith and David, Horatio and Mucius Scaevola were heroes of different design but were equally ready to give up their lives for their friends.

Pagan Heroism

When we were living in Rome I remember receiving the visit of a distant cousin, a surgeon, whom none of us had met as he lived in another part of Europe. We knew he was not a Catholic and were surprised when he told us that he had brought his daughter, a child of twelve, to Rome "on pilgrimage." He explained that he wished her to see with her own eyes the sites of some of the great actions of antiquity which she was studying in her books, to awaken in her a capacity for patriotism and public spirit. Ten years later, when their country was invaded this family suffered long imprisonment for their resistance to Nazi oppressors, and their courage on behalf of their fellow citizens. I cannot, during my years in Rome, remember any Catholic families bringing their children to gather strength of that sort at the tombs of the martyrs, or deliberately preparing them to face death for Christ. There were some no doubt, but such ardor was mostly confined to young people in the missionary orders and was rarely the result of an educational design. In that age of comparative peace I confess the catacombs were a damp archeological duty to most of us, and the Colosseum no more than a memorial to the architectural bad taste of Vespasian. Not that the martyrs were quite forgotten. They were among the bright jewels of our wonderful Christian heritage and filled us with a grateful if somewhat frightened tenderness. In spite of the martyrdoms which had already been going on for years in formerly Christian Russia, most of us did not have the remotest feeling that we should ever be called upon to testify to Christ with our blood. Since then, several

of our friends of that prosperous period who had returned to their own countries have been obliged to do so. Our cousin, the surgeon, with his cult of pagan heroism, was closer to the reality of the modern world than we with our aesthetic and sentimental Catholicism.

Jesus the Hero

It is extraordinary that many of us have been so blinded, extraordinary that we should still be so blind, to the central fact of Christianity: the Cross; the Cross on which Christ died and which He left each one of us to take up. Jesus is the Hero in very essence and in every meaning of the word. Apart from being God, He is "*the Man*," He is the Lord and Leader of His people, He Who lives not for Himself but for them, He Who gives His life for His friends. He calls His followers to courage "under His standard, telling them they shall not have peace but the sword. He treats them like men, warning them that they will never be without the weight of the Cross on their shoulders, and yet that they will, being His soldiers, find it light. He tells them that the world will be their enemy, that it will hate and persecute and stone and kill them because He is their Leader, and He tells them that though they are a little flock they must yet be fearless. He tells them they are to leave all things behind them, never looking back and taking no thought for the morrow. He demands that absolute and unwavering confidence which alone wins battles. He exacts total sacrifice of life and limb, complete carelessness of self, the abandonment of every bourgeois standard of security and common sense and good form. And this invitation to heroism of the highest order has been accepted by His friends. One after another ordinary people here and there have left their ordinary lives to join the whole army of martyrs, or have stayed in their ordinary lives and transformed them by their vigilant courage into extraordinary lives. As Saint Teresa once said, "It is astonishing He has so many friends seeing how He treats them." He demands of His followers such total abnegation, such terrible oblation, that one wonders at the myriads who have flocked to His flag up to this day. It would be quite impossible if he did not help them so much; even then He seems not to be doing so at all. The scandal of that "unsuccessful" life and the folly of that bloody death on the Cross are repeated in the lives and deaths of all those who "supply what is still lacking to His Passion." So much poverty and pain and blood disturbs our squeamish taste. But the Church which has been drenched in blood since her foundation goes faithfully on like a scarred old drill sergeant teaching us not to be

afraid to shed our own in the cause of such a leader. For if our blood is more precious to us while it flows sluggishly in our veins than spilt for the truth, if we do not love the Lord better than our lives, then we are not fully men nor even quite alive.

The Minimum Request

All this we know, yet how hard it is to be a hero! Not only is it naturally difficult for us; it is made still more difficult by our surroundings. The easier our lives the more loath are we to leave them. The comparative facility of existence in a wealthy republic distracts our minds from the habitual rigors of the human lot. We all grow spiritually plump, and our recumbent souls are too often encouraged to lie still by the mistaken kindness of those who should rouse for battle. Have we not heard ourselves warmly congratulated on our zeal—which consisted in turning up at a Communion Breakfast? Have we not been thanked in the name of the Lord for attending a Holy Name meeting which was in great part taken up with eating hotdogs and watching a Mickey Mouse movie? (Though I am not particularly partial to the works of Disney I do not think that the film was intended to mortify our senses.) From sermons and chats with our clerical friends do we not very often get the impression that we are really pretty wonderful to be practicing Catholics at all? Almost as if God had more to gain by it than we. When someone talks of the heroic implications of Christianity they are more often than not assured soothingly that the main thing is to be realistic, that one must not ask too much of people, that one must be glad they are so good and generous as they are, and that it's just wonderful how everybody seems to give up something, candy or smoking or even liquor, in Lent. One gathers that on the whole we are a pretty decent bunch and that God ought to be glad to have us around. This is perhaps a crude condensation of the "minimalist" attitude—the attitude of those who will do the strict minimum and yet hope for Heaven. But one meets this mentality so frequently that it must be strongly stressed if it is to be corrected.

The little D.P. priest was right, and these "minimists" are psychologically wrong. The more you ask of a man the more he will give and the more he will be able to give. This has been proved by the real realists of our times, the totalitarians. They demand everything of a man and they get it. It is true that if they don't get it they destroy him. But it is faith, not fear, that moves the majority of the young communists. They are thoroughly trained, not only in the tenets of their creed, but also, and very deliberately, in the technique of heroism. The life of the

Komsomol is so ascetic that the manner of life of the average Catholic Action group here would seem one of Babylonian luxury beside it. The young communist is taught how to preach and convert and does not have to be taught never to let slip an opportunity for indoctrination. The young communist believes in his materialist faith as we do not believe in God. Not only is he ready to die for it, but he is deliberately taught to do so. Communists who have abjured Marxism tell us how in Northern and Eastern Europe before the last war young party leaders attended secret "universities" where they were put through courses of torture to teach them silent endurance should they fall into the hands of the capitalist police. Everything in the lives of these missionaries was and is organized with only one cause in view. Here indeed is realism and its fruit is often heroism. Is it realistic on our part to live in the same world as these fearless, hardened beings and not prepare to meet them on the same ground? Even if sacrifice of self were not characteristic of our religion, would we not be wise in merely human prudence to practice it in preparation for our meeting with such selfless enemies? If the communists are prepared to be poor, then instead of seeking riches we must be prepared to be poorer. If they are prepared to endure, then instead of seeking pleasure we must be prepared to endure more. If they are prepared to suffer torture, then we must, with the aid of God, be prepared to suffer it too. (I tremble to think of it, yet friends of mine, people like myself, have suffered it in these years, with no wish at all to be heroes, no option given.) We must learn that if we will not be poor for Christ's sake we shall be poor anyway, if we will not endure for His love we shall be made to endure for the love we bore to money. If we will not suffer and die for Christ we shall suffer and die without Him anyway. And have all eternity to regret the choice by which we were wasted. To be a hero is not a luxury but a necessity. It is essential to life. If we do not try to be heroes we shall not succeed in being men. If we do not try to be saints we shall fail to be ordinary Christians.

When the Church raises one of her children to the altars she describes him as having had "heroic virtues." The phrase is redundant, both words stemming from the ancient root "man." Our Mother thereby emphasizes that this man has attained the end for which he was created, inasmuch as being manly to a superlative degree he has become fit to associate with Him Whose image and likeness he bears.

MARION MITCHELL STANCIOFF



"Beloved Sons And Daughters..."

"Grant . . . to young men the strength that is born of faith."

(Holy Year Prayer)

In a recent address to a group of young people, the Holy Father uttered a challenge to all Catholic youth throughout the world: "On the youth of today will fall the direction of, and responsibility for, tomorrow. Live, then, your today in the continuous presence of God."* In the prayer for the Holy Year, composed by the Holy Father himself, and recited daily by millions throughout the world, he singled out one great need for the young men of today—"the strength that is born of faith."

In another talk to young men** the Holy Father revealed more fully what he and the whole Church expect of them.

1. A firm knowledge of the Catholic faith. Young men may feel a great enthusiasm for the faith; but it must not be founded alone on sentiment or custom. "If you do not want your enthusiasm to collapse as a balloon in the hands of a child, it must be based on clear and strong foundations. You must have a reasoned and profound knowledge of the object of your faith."

This is not always easy in our day; there are so many attacks upon the faith from every quarter. Yet insists the Holy Father: "Catholic science has profoundly explored from every angle all the questions that concern religion, the redemption, the Church. It is up to you to become acquainted with its conclusions, its solutions, its replies to difficulties, so that your faith may be alive and fruitful. This is your first duty."

2. Personal courage. The Holy Father insists that the emphasis here is on the word "personal." Why? "To form a solid, compact block . . . animated not by schemes for violence, but by plans for the dutiful and loyal defense of the highest, most sacred ideals, is certainly an excellent thing: in such a group there is mutual, fraternal support and it is easier to be brave. But you must be brave also if somewhere, sometime, in special circumstances, you find yourself in a minority, with few supporters,

* *L'Osservatore Romano*, Jan. 7-8, 1950.

** *Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Pio XII*, Vol. IX, pp. 381-384.

even alone, facing an adversary more numerous and daring. Be ready to resist to the end, against all, in affirming the law of God, in defense of the faith and the Church, and, we must add for our times, in protecting the order, progress and peace of society, whenever the common good needs your assistance . . . This is the second of your duties. Listen to the third."

3. Perfect Unity of religion and life. The third duty is by far the most difficult to fulfill (and not only for young people): only those who have been carefully trained to fulfill the first two can succeed in making a synthesis between religion and life in all its manifestations. Yet the Holy Father is most insistent. He points out that the Catholic Church has never been the "Church of the catacombs," not even during the period of the Roman persecutions. The early Christians did not live hidden lives. "They were fully conscious of their duty to conquer the world for Christ, to transform both private and public life according to the doctrine and the law of the Divine Savior, so that from their activities a new civilization should be born, a new Rome should rise over the tombs of the chief Apostles.

"The mission of the Church and of every one of her members has not changed: it is still the mission to bring back to Christ the whole of life, individual, private, public; to allow no truce until His doctrine and His law has completely renewed and reformed it all. Especially today, when the forces of incredulity and irreligion try more violently to thrust Christ and His Church off the highways of humanity, the files of the Christian militia, of the youth particularly, must close ranks and do battle for the sovereign rights of Christ and the liberty of His Church, on which depend not only the eternal salvation of souls, but also the dignity and happiness of men on earth, civil order, justice and peace. Here any vivisection is lethal: one cannot kill the Christian without destroying by the same blow the citizen and the honest man."

The Holy Father well knows that this is a task impossible of accomplishment by men alone, no matter how great their personal courage, or how united a front they present to the enemy. It can be done only under the leadership of Her, "who alone has crushed all heresies." "She, the Seat of Wisdom, the faithful and powerful Virgin, the Help of Christians, the Queen of Peace, will lead you to a sure victory."

J. V. C.

Love or Be Damned

Love is the most important thing in the whole world. It isn't too difficult to get people to agree with that. As the song says: "It is love alone that rules for aye."

People are quite ready to admit the primacy of love. The trouble is that a great many people disagree as to what love is. Their notion of it is often an extremely vague, confused one. We Christians too share this lack of clarity about the nature of love. If we are asked to explain Christian love—which is essentially a supernatural love—we hesitate for awhile. At last we say, "Well, supernatural love is charity."

This definition proves extremely inadequate to the world in general—not that they think they have any doubt as to what charity is, but because equating supernatural love to charity gives them nothing except an exceedingly false notion. For charity to most of the world means giving money. The word "charity" conjures up the picture of someone being on relief, or standing in line at a soup kitchen. It is a word that may carry a meaning of pitiful disdain for you if you happen to be on the receiving end of the "charity," or it may carry a meaning of approbation if you happen to be on the giving end of it.

Charity Equals Money Given

This equating of charity with money is unbelievably widespread. Even Catholics have lost their sense of its supereminent greatness and use the word with the meaning given it by the world in general. I could hardly believe my eyes the other day when we received a letter from a Catholic organization acknowledging a contribution. It read, "You have given something greater than charity . . ." I read it several times to be sure, for echoing in my ears were Saint Paul's words, "The greatest of these is charity." It was not, of course, that the organization in question had really discovered something greater than charity. It is just that they had accepted the modern definition of charity as *money given*. And certainly one doesn't have to go far to find something greater than money!

When the Christian uses the word charity as a name for the greatest virtue, the essence of perfection for man, and as another name for God, he discovers that he runs into a peculiar situation. The modern man is inclined to treat the matter lightly and see nothing very noble or supernatural about charity, for to him too often it means: 1—money given, for any motive whatsoever; 2—a reason for claiming an income tax deduction.

Love Equals Emotion

So the Christian trying to explain charity—the basic mark of his Christianity—mentally shifts his weight to the other foot. He will explain charity as “love.” That’s fine. People like that word better. It may conjure up a pleasanter picture inclusive of moonlight, honeysuckle, romance and sentiment. But this definition is no better help in giving an idea of the supernatural thing we are talking about; for if charity equals money, too often love equals emotion. That is in its less harmful, modern usage. Love is also made a synonym for something very harmful—for uncontrolled sexual desire. Thus in the pulp novel, the hero and heroine who have fallen in “love” justify their going off and leaving their respective lawful spouses by saying: “This thing (love) is too big for both of us.” And so they succumb to it. And the readers are led to believe that love is an irresistible force, immoral but terribly attractive. Love which should be tremendous because of its purity, rightness and essential greatness, is tremendous because of its passion, immorality and baseness. What should be a synonym for the greatest virtue thus becomes a synonym for approved and indulged vice.

However, there are people who, while not adhering to the Christian ideal, do have a more lofty conception of love than the one given in popular songs and stories. But we are compelled to bear witness to the decline of the dignity and self-sacrifice of this naturally good love. Divorce statistics tell of the decay of conjugal love, and the attitude of many women who refuse to bear children tells of the gradual obliteration of natural maternal love. The fact is that without supernatural love we are not able to keep for long even that love to which we are inclined by nature.

Clarity About Charity

If the corruption of the best is the worst, we have an inverse proof of the greatness of charity, for nothing has suffered more wretched degradation. If we are to start the up-hill climb to the return of a Christian society, nothing is of greater importance than a correct idea of the nature of charity. This is of special importance moreover for the people who hope to foster the return; for if there is one thing necessary for apostles, it is charity. And if there is one thing about which there seems to be a great lack of clarity in the minds of lay apostles, it is the true meaning and nature of charity.

Let us examine charity, not by hopping from one foot to the other in a vain effort to take a stand in conformity with the

mind of the world, but by putting both feet firmly on the ground of our faith and proceeding from there.

A Supernatural Virtue

We must insist on the entirely supernatural character of charity. It is a virtue which God infuses into our souls at the moment of our Baptism. With sanctifying grace which makes us partakers in the life of God, we receive the virtues of faith, hope and charity. It is important to notice that charity is given along with faith and hope. It can never exist separated from them. Yet that is something we have forgotten. We talk of the "charity" of atheists, and bestow the name of a magnificent, God-given gift on what is generally humanitarianism or a vague feeling of fellowship. For charity, in its true notion, is man's love of God as the object of his beatitude. It means that man has contracted a friendship with God, is capable of giving Him love and of receiving love in return. It means further that because through charity man loves God, he loves also his neighbor who shares with him the good of God. With this idea of charity in mind it becomes evident why we cannot have true charity without faith and hope. For how can we love God unless we believe He exists? And how can we love Him as the object of our happiness unless we hope we can attain to Him?

To maintain that there can be charity divorced from God is to distort the idea completely. For charity in us is a share of the charity of God. We say, "God is Love." But if our love is to resemble His, it must be a love based on Him, not on our own nature, nor on emotions or vague humanitarian feeling.

The charity which God infuses into our souls is something beyond our nature and natural powers. It is true that with his nature unimpaired, without the supernatural virtue of charity, man could have loved God and even have loved Him more than himself, but this natural love of God would not have had the nature of intimate friendship. The supernatural love of charity gives man the privilege of loving God, in a sense as His equal. Charity raises him to the level of God, not of course in the sense that he loses his status as creature, but in the sense that it makes possible communication and union between God and man.

Love is a Gift

But this bond of friendship cannot be had by our mere wish. Sometimes we forget this because we are used to taking the overwhelming fact of the Incarnation for granted. We forget that love is a gift, and that to Christ we are indebted for the love

of God abiding in us. If it is obvious to us that friendship between a king and a commoner can only be brought into being by the king's choosing, it should be even clearer that any friendship between the infinite, transcendent God and us, His creatures, can only exist if God wills it. No amount of natural effort or striving on our part can acquire it. It is a wholly supernatural thing. No amount of natural improvement can merit it. If we'd think it ridiculous that an ape, by striving to become like man, could acquire the virtue of art and paint beautiful pictures, we would be equally foolish to think that a man could by his own efforts take on the life and virtue of God. This love which is beyond us must be freely given by God.

Charity Not Measured by Natural Capacity

The measure of charity in us is according to the free dispensing of the Holy Spirit. We sometimes forget that and feel that a person receives a measure of charity according to his natural capacity. Thus we feel that a person who has a natural talent for making friends and getting along with people has greater charity than someone lacking in natural social graces. It is true that natural charm and amiability may facilitate the exercise of charity, and that if we have them we should thank God and use them in His service. But such natural talents do not merit charity from God, nor does the lack of them limit it in any way. We may be almost completely lacking in natural gifts, yet have received from God a large measure of charity. On the roster of the saints are naturally stupid people and others without conventional social graces, but their natural defects did not prevent God from giving them great charity.

The way to get this virtue from God therefore is not by developing one's natural talents but by humble supplication and cooperation with the Holy Spirit Who prepares our souls to receive it.

Charity and Natural Goodness

The reason we emphasize the supernatural character of charity is because people who are interested in reconstructing the social order often think they must unite men by the natural bonds of love, and when they have succeeded fully then charity can be added on, as an icing for a well-mixed cake. How completely erroneous this is we can see by means of an analogy. We say a dog is friendly, but we never propose the precepts of Cicero's essay *On Friendship* as the normal development of his amiable tail-wagging. Similarly we cannot expect friendship on the natural level to develop into supernatural friendship with God



U G H T H E A G E S

ASSION

3.

FREE DOM



6.

JUSTICE

FREE
BARABBAS



(charity) just because we give it sufficient time to develop. The virtue of charity comes from God directly; we don't grow into it. However, because what is supernatural in man is never divorced from what is natural, charity expresses itself in simple, ordinary, natural-seeming acts. Filling a man's natural, human needs for food, clothing, and adequate housing may be acts of the supernatural virtue of charity if a man does them for his brother who shares the love of God with himself. Charity, while it is wholly supernatural, works through the natural, and to preserve its supernatural character we need not confine its exercise to spiritual or religious spheres. Rather charity should be at the basis of all man's actions whether or not they pertain directly to his eternal destiny.

Charity Embraces Everyone

Our charity must extend to everybody. That is a simple statement, but it is a necessary reminder to a world which maintains that we are free to choose whom we should love. Even the *smallest* degree of charity includes *everyone*. In charity we love God and our neighbor that he may be in God. From this charity we can exclude no one—not sinners, not even our enemies. People sometimes feel that loving our enemies is something for saints. To go out of our way to show our love for our enemies, to minister to their needs at great cost, or to give our life for them would be to go beyond the strict obligation and display heroic charity. But we are *obliged* by charity to maintain an inward love for those who have harmed us (desiring for them the same beatitude we wish for ourselves) and we must be willing to show our charity by outward actions if the necessity ever arises.

Love is a Command

Our love must extend to all. We emphasize that charity is not a matter of counsel. It is an obligation. It is the absolutely necessary virtue. It is up to the individual whether he will embrace the counsels of perfection, but it is a strict commandment from God to every man that "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength and with thy whole mind. And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It is in charity in which perfection consists, and it is to its exercise according to the twofold precept of love that we are strictly bound.

The Practice of Charity

We said that charity must extend to all. What then about the practice of charity? Well, we are obliged to do good to everyone, in the sense that we must be ready to help anyone. We can and should pray for all, but it is obvious that even if we were tri-

located it would be physically impossible to do acts of charity to everybody. What then are we supposed to do? The answer, and it is really a simple one, is that we should do good to those near us, and whom circumstances (that is God's Will) put in our path. So that "we must do good to all" does not remain an indefinite, sterile statement, we must do good to those with whom God puts us in contact. It is a strange charity that would love vaguely people all over the globe, and yet refuse to succor someone in need in our vicinity. For all we know, the priest and levite who neglected to help the man fallen among robbers were busy making plans for various charitable enterprises. Their fault was, however, that they neglected to show charity to someone right in their path. We imitate them when we busy ourselves in thinking about helping the world in general, yet neglect those right around us whom we refuse to help because it would be inconvenient or disagreeable. We develop our willingness to help anybody and everybody by doing acts of charity for those God sends to us. In practicing charity we bear in mind that we are bound to give first to those who are closest to us by nature. But if a stranger is in desperate need, we should help him rather than our relatives who are not in urgent need. That is something we should bear in mind when we are urged to contribute money for starving Europeans and we protest that they are complete strangers.

Almsgiving — An Obligation

This question of the practice of charity again makes us reiterate that it is not a matter of personal whim. Practicing charity is a matter of precept. Almsgiving is a matter of obligation. This should make us wake up if we feel that giving to the poor is a laudable custom but something which we really do not have to do. The fact is that we are bound to give alms of our surplus, as also to give alms to anyone in extreme need. Doing so is an obligation in charity. It is not at all a matter of supererogation. I remember what a terrific impression I received when I read that Saint Thomas says it is even possible to commit a mortal sin by refusing to give alms. We forget about that as we sit back after we have performed an act of charity and become disgruntled if the "thank you" notes don't pour in. It is significant, too, that in the picture Christ gave us of the last judgment, He did not point out the robbers and adulterers going to hell but those who saw Him hungry and did not give Him to eat, and thirsty and did not give Him to drink.

We hasten to add here, lest we give the impression of again equating charity with money, that giving money is only one way

of practicing charity. And it is only too possible to give money to the poor without charity. But we cannot give alms for God's sake, "with delight and readiness and altogether as we ought" unless we have charity within us.

Spiritual Alms

There are both spiritual and corporal alms. We are to exercise our charity in attending to the corporal and *spiritual* wants of our neighbor. If a man is starving people agree that we should give him food, but if he is in mortal sin, too often they will tell us that it is none of our business. Yet the spiritual needs of our neighbor are more important than the physical. The person who lives in a community where everybody is well-fed, well-housed and well-clothed cannot sit back and say there is no opportunity to practice the works of mercy when there are people in desperate spiritual need. If it is a work of mercy to "clothe the naked" it is also a work of mercy to "admonish the sinner." And in practicing charity we can again recall that we should aid those in urgent need. Whose need is more urgent than sinners'? That is why God has special love for them. Those who are holy are most like Him, and for that reason His love for them is greater, but sinners are in desperate need of God and that is why Christ had a special fondness for them. We should try in every way to aid those who are estranged from God by ignorance or sin. That is the whole purpose of the apostolate of the Christian today: to demonstrate the charity of Christ in all phases of human life and thus bring individuals and society back to God. That is why the practice of charity is of utmost importance. We will become holy by loving; we will bring our neighbor to the enjoyment of God by loving him.

The most urgent call on our charity today is made by the everyday pagan who does not know or love God. There is a common line of reasoning, of which the Devil seems to be taking advantage, which makes us say of persons, "We cannot judge them." That then seems to relieve us of all obligation to help them, since we don't know whether or not they are sinners or in spiritual need. It is beside the point, of course, whether or not a person is subjectively guilty of mortal sin. The point is, is Christ a reality to him? Is he aware of His love? If he isn't he needs Him, and if we have charity in our hearts we will strive to bring Christ to him.

Truth and Charity

Many people have the misconception that to be charitable you cannot recognize the truth. Thus social workers urged to "accept"

the client are told that they have no right to believe him in sin. Every possible reason is given to prove he is not, and therefore they can accept him. The implication is that they could not "accept" sinners. Christian charity's attitude is entirely different. Just as Our Lord accepted Mary Magdalen as she was and did not close His eyes to the fact that she was a sinner, we are to accept and love people regardless of their sins. Perhaps humanitarianism has to prove people are "deserving," but the Christian must give love without concern about his neighbor's worthiness to receive it. For we Christians must recognize that none of us is worthy of love. God has given it to us freely; His love is a gift. We bear that truth in mind when we show our love for others. Charity does not shut our eyes to their paganism or their sins, but charity rises above those things. Along with seeing the fact that there is much evil and hatred of God in the world today, we see the truth that we ourselves are sinners. Our sins don't keep us from desiring eternal happiness with God, so why should our neighbor's sins keep us from loving him and desiring his beatitude?

The great apostle of charity, Saint Vincent de Paul, had a realistic attitude toward the poor. He recognized that they were often ungrateful, conniving, repulsive. He knew those truths about them, but he also knew they were his brothers in Christ, and he loved them because of that fact. There is no contradiction between truth and charity. We don't have to close our eyes in order to love. "Love is blind," they say; but to love people we can face facts about them. Like God Who sees our sins but Whose mercy makes Him forgetful of them, if we truly love our neighbor our love will rise above our knowledge of any disagreeable truths about him.

Although charity and truth are not opposed, false charity and truth are much opposed. It is not surprising then that with the modern false notion of charity there should be the feeling that we must hide unpleasant truths from people, even if the knowledge of such truths is of great importance to them. Thus, people feel it would be unkind to tell someone that he is dying. Rather they fool him with false encouragement. Real charity would face the truth, because if we have real love for the dying person we want to help him prepare for death. We consider his eternal happiness more important than any temporary discomfiture.

Politeness and truth are sometimes opposed, but charity is not at all the same as politeness. It probably would not be considered polite to give fraternal correction; yet fraternal correction ("admonishing the sinner") if it will help the person reprove,

and if it is given with humility and prudence, is an obligation in charity.

Truth and charity are not opposed because the Spirit of Truth is also the Spirit of Love. It must be admitted, however, that we weak human beings have a hard time keeping truth and charity in harmony. Lay apostles who often see only too clearly the hypocrisy and evil of modern life have to learn to speak the truth with charity. It will help if we keep in mind the truth of our own nothingness, if God has given us understanding of the void in modern life and of the necessity for a Christian renewal, we are His debtors and are bound to pay our debt by very ardent love of those to whom He has not given such understanding. By degrees, and as the result of humble prayer, we will learn that charity sweetens and softens hard truths, not by concealing them, but by rising above them and wrapping all people in the love of God. For charity recognizes the tremendous truth that God is Love.

Acts of Charity According to the Virtue in Us

Sometimes we forget that acts of charity can only be as great as the virtue of charity we possess. We cannot say to someone, "Start loving your neighbor as much as Saint Vincent de Paul did." Everyone can only perform acts of love according to his measure of charity. The outward effects of the virtue cannot be greater than the virtue itself. We cannot expect someone with a small degree of charity to perform the heroic acts of the saints. It might be wise to mention here that of course the value of an act of charity depends not on the difficulty or greatness of the act itself, but on the intensity of the love with which it is performed.

However, the fact that we can act only according to the virtue in us, is no reason to sit back complacently and say, "I'm no saint, so I'm not supposed to exercise great charity." We should love God and our neighbor and perform acts of love as best we can. Each act of charity we perform disposes us to receive from God an increase of charity. We would advance quickly in the way of love and grow rapidly in holiness if we did every one of our actions with as much love as possible.

Justice and Charity

In one of his books Father Garrigou-Lagrange complains that many pious people perform acts of charity while neglecting to pay attention to the claims of justice.

If we are to become holy in the world today we cannot neglect the importance of working for social justice. It is only too true that in the past too many pious people with false consciences have done acts of charity while neglecting their duties in justice.

They gave money to the poor and neglected to pay their own employees a living wage. While we strive to become holy by charity (for love is at once the end and the chief means to holiness) we must not forget the claims of justice. Our obligations in justice take precedence over our obligations in charity. But the virtue of justice like all other virtues depends on the virtue of charity. We cannot possess infused justice unless we possess charity. While practicing justice, we must also practice charity; for our modern social evils which have resulted from grave injustice will only be remedied if great charity is combined with the practice of justice. One of the intentions the Pope has given us for the Holy Year is "the realization of social justice through works of assistance to the humble and needy." You cannot say, "I will practice justice, but not go out of my way to love," for if you do, you will end up by not even practicing justice. I think the truth of this can be demonstrated by the fact of a black market during the war years. People had not sufficient love to share with their neighbor, so that they ended up not only by refusing to do the sharing charity demanded, but by patronizing a black market which deprived their neighbor of his right in justice to a fair opportunity to obtain food and other goods.

Charity must vivify the fight for justice. It must temper it with mercy and prevent it from becoming too harsh. Without charity the letter of the law will be followed, and the spirit of true justice will be lost.

We must strive to fulfill our obligations in justice, for we cannot neglect justice and become really holy. But at the same time our justice must proceed from our love.

Can We Love Too Much?

The truth is that charity is never supposed to stop increasing in this life. The virtue of charity in us will never grow larger than it is supposed to grow. The holier we become the more we will be aware that we can never love too much, for "the measure of love is to love without measure." Unfortunately too many of us feel that we love God enough. We forget that in the matter of charity there is no such thing as being guilty of an extreme. We can be too "just," too "temperate," too "meek," but we can never love too much.

When people criticize other people for loving too much, often what they really mean is that they love inordinately or that their way of showing their love is not guided by prudence. "Loving not wisely but too well," means not loving according to the proper order of charity.

People sometimes confuse the virtue of charity with a particular act of charity. Thus, although we *cannot love* our neighbor *too much*, if we love him properly in God, it is possible that we *can do too much* for him in a particular course of action. The *virtue* of charity is never limited nor modified, but a *particular act* of charity must be modified by circumstances. If a person is in need, our love directed by prudence helps us in determining which of various possible means we should use to relieve him. An example which illustrates this is the story of a sixteen-year-old boy. He was not too intelligent and consequently left school. Too lazy to get a job, he felt that manual labor was beneath him. People felt sorry for him and performed misdirected acts of charity by giving him money. He spent his days sitting around smoking and looking at obscene magazines. His character was deteriorating, and it was obvious that the money was merely doing him harm. It would have been much more trouble, but it would have been more beneficial to him, if someone had expended the effort to help him find some occupation that would be within his capacity, and had taken the time to encourage him and give him a Christian philosophy of work.

As Saint Augustine says, sometimes we should give a spiritual alms to a person rather than the corporal alms for which he asks. The point is however, that we cannot refuse to help him. We must not forget that Christ gave us the new commandment. "A new commandment I give unto you: that you should love one another as I have loved you."

The greatest danger for modern-day apostles is that they will limit their love and forget that ardent charity alone can save the world. "God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son. And the Son so loved us that He gave His life for us."

DOROTHY DOHEN

THE NEW DISPENSATION

God is not a tyrant.

He'll always be quite lenient.

Just so you do the proper thing.

Whenever it's convenient.



The Color of a Soul

Saint Therese of Lisieux wrote *The Story of a Soul*; I am going to write about the color of a soul. But, you will tell me, souls are not material substances, so they do not have color. In that case I would swallow my first reply because I would know that it had in it the dregs of an old bitterness and pain that only God's love could have softened, that only His love could have erased so completely. I would wait a moment, then ask calmly as I could, "Then why have you made the soul into a thing of color, racial or national origin, or acted as if it were?"

In families there are certain characteristics, perhaps of appearance, or temperament, or common tastes, or names, that make the members of that family easily identified, that distinguishes them from other groups or families. The Christian is a part of a family group, so he too must have some quality that marks him, that shows he is one of the family.

Christ, Our Lord, has told us unmistakably what that characteristic is: "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you . . . by this all men shall know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."

"Love," He said, "as I have loved you."

When we consider how much He loved and loves us, we see that He is asking something quite different and substantially more than that vague "humanitarianism" that makes us feel a sort of hazy sentimental affection and mild pity for the Negroes, or the Jews, or the dispossessed peoples of Europe and Asia dying daily as a result of our modern war, or the hungry, beaten poor of our own industrial system, or any other suffering people. That makes us feel a self-conscious shame, quickly pushed back into our subconscious, as we say sorrowfully, sighing, as we recline in our plush chairs and turn the dial of our new television set to another station, to something more cheerful. "I'll have to remember to send something to CARE or donate a dollar to the NAACP. When I have time, when the press of business isn't so great," or perhaps we say wrathfully, "It isn't decent that people should have to live and suffer like that. Somebody, the government ought to do something; the government ought to pass a bill or something." Who is the government?

No, that could not have been what Our Lord meant!

"As I have loved *you*," He said. That is not *you* in general, not you as a term in the total sum of humanity, but *you* in particular, *you* as one individual. As I have loved you enough to humble

myself and be humbled for your sakes. As I have loved you enough to stand alone against society and convention and the customs of My people when I knew they were wrong. As I have loved you enough to share your poverty and wretchedness and misery rather than be a part of the group that oppresses you. As I have loved you not only enough to want joy for you, to ask joy for you, but enough to give my very life for our sakes, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be full.

That's how He loved us. That's the love He asks of us.

Sounds hard, doesn't it? Not at all like that rarified, conventionalized "love" that allows us to sleep peacefully, eat grandly, work in factories or jobs that depersonalize humanity even as they discriminate against this person of color or foreign origin, just to fatten our already too-fat purses, with never a twang of conscience (A man has to live, doesn't he?) and spend all our time not sleeping or eating or working, in pursuit of a transitory pleasure while a million people are crucified daily and a diseased society dies under our nose. It would seem that the stench of its rotting carcass would wake us up—but it doesn't; at least it seems to be taking a long time.

One thing can be said for that well-known question, now considered standard, that the prejudiced Southern, white American is supposed to ask his more "liberal" white brother from the north (who does not *say* a Negro cannot eat in his restaurant but who will not serve him there; who will not *say* a Negro cannot live in this section or this housing project, but to the Negro it is always filled, or there is a restrictive covenant, who will give him only those salaries which make it forever impossible for him to move beyond the boundaries of the colored section; his method is less open, but quite effective).

But his Southern brothers asks, "Would you want your sister to marry a Negro?"

People don't like that question. They are afraid of it. It is too open. It is too suggestive of that "love one another as I have loved you." It doesn't leave a lot of room for shying away, or filibuster. Even if you succeed in deceiving your shrewd questioner, you can no longer deceive yourselves as to the reality of your love. You see the true answer in your own heart and you know.

It brings you down to personalities instead of that vague body you call the Negro Race, in just that manner as if it were one entity that you could pick up, handle and examine, and not just a

term used to designate millions of individual people with individual problems and individual sufferings.

When I first became Catholic there was one stumbling block for me which I never admitted to anyone, because I was ashamed. It was in regard to devotion to Our Blessed Lady. I do not know if any other colored converts feel it or not; if so, probably like me they do not admit it. They too will have to fight their way to the light of truth assisted by the grace of a loving and merciful God Who understands even those uncertainties and bitterness admitted only in our subconsciousness, and the tenderness of a Mother who can wait for the love of her wayward children.

I could not feel that the Blessed Virgin was my Mother because I thought of her as white, and my experience with white people until that time had not included any who would want to mother a dark baby. Strange, isn't it? I could not see Our Lady as Mother, only as "white." I was afraid she would not love me or want my love.

I didn't know then that she herself had been just a poor girl, rich only in humility, love and faith. I had never stopped to think that if she lived in our world today, she herself would be one of the unwanted, the persecuted, she would be one of the "dirty Jews," one of the poor which our economists assure us are "drags on our society." She is one of us. She is Mother. She does know. I need never have been afraid.

Since then I have met others who in trying to lead the Christ-life refuse to see any color to my soul or theirs, or notice the difference in the color of the body that houses them. They are mostly people little and poor like myself, but they are also rich in love.

"The poor He has filled with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away."

I am glad I am poor with a dark body to cover my colorless soul. I want to be filled with the good things of God.

HELEN CALDWELL



SWELL PEOPLE

Future brave historians,

Will tender us a prize:

"Never have such nasty things
Been done by nicer guys."

High School Proms

There is general dissatisfaction in the secular world of education. Standards, teachers, methods, subjects, facilities, all are being subjected to healthy probing and questioning. There is also a great deal of experimentation; whether this is dangerous or not is not the question here. The point is, it evinces a certain humility that sees something is wrong and seeks an answer. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could point to our Catholic schools and say, "Look, here's what you want. We've had it all the time!"

In a sense that is true. We do have what they're looking for. We have had it all the time. But we have practically choked the life out of it, for we have buried it under layers of non-essentials. Just pointing at our schools will not bring it before their eyes. What most of them will see is a kind of limping, country-cousin, backward attempt to keep up with their latest educational gimcracks, swimming-pools, athletic paraphernalia, audio-visual gadgets, etc. . . .

"We've got all that, and much better, much more modern, much more efficient," they can say.

"With our tax-money," we mutter between our teeth. Well, we can show them a thing or two.

"Of course, we have religion," we say, getting very haughty and dignified. "You can't have any real culture without religion. That's what's the matter with the world. No religion. We have it."

"Oh, yes, we've heard about that. Where do you keep it? In a secret vault?"

We glare them down, for we don't quite consider them worth the effort of digging deep and unearthing our religious treasures for their benefit. Suppose we did tell them about the way we all pitched in and got a new oil-burner for the Sisters' house, or the work that went into our Bingo Party to provide a juke-box for the Junior Guild? They might not understand. They might even laugh. So we go on hurriedly:

"Besides that, we really make ladies and gentlemen out of our youngsters. They can fit into the highest places in the world. There's a high-toned atmosphere in our schools that they can't help absorbing—even those who come from poorer homes. Why, they have their proms at the most expensive hotel in town!"

Rev. Daniel M. Cantwell, Chaplain of the Catholic Labor Alliance in Chicago said in his article entitled "Secularism in

Church," published in *Commonweal*: "The roots of secularism find nourishment in our Catholic hearts. The roots of secularism stem from our Catholic schools, too."

Certainly there is secularism in our Catholic schools' recreational activities. Witness this scene in a girls' high school classroom the Monday after the Saturday night prom.

Clustering about the desk of their favorite Sister, who knows it is useless to expect any lessons today, they twitter and sigh.

"Sister, it was dreamy."

"Oh, Sister, it was divine."

Sister croons sympathetically, and, one by one, the stories come out. Here is a typical one:

"My dress was black nylon net over flesh-colored satin. . . . Oh, yes, Sister, very modest for an evening-gown . . . just a little off the shoulders, you know. You should have seen Phil stare! At first he thought I didn't have anything on under the net! (giggles) . . . He brought me the most gorgeous corsage! I hate to think what he paid for it. . . .

"The hotel ball-room was all decorated with our school colors, and the band played the school song, straight at first, then swung it up. Phil kept taking me out to the bar between dances, but of course I was very careful not to drink too much. . . . At twelve-thirty we all got together and sang a hymn to the Blessed Virgin. . . ." Here there is a murmur of approval from Sister. . . .

"Oh, absolutely, Sister . . . I bet there was nobody in that hotel that didn't know what religion we belonged to. . . . Oh, yes, Sister, practically everyone behaved himself . . . only a few of the boys got ossified, but that happens at every party, there's always someone to spoil it. . . . Then Phil and I and a bunch got together and did the night clubs—the Stork Club, the Copacabana, Twenty-one. . . . We had our pictures taken at the Copacabana. . . . See, here's Phil and me on a match box with the name of the club underneath. . . . Well, the photographer made us put our faces together so we'd both come out in the picture. . . . Well, yes, he did have his arm around my neck, but it wasn't what you think. He sort of needed a little support at the moment. The air was kind of thick and he accidentally mixed a few. . . . Oh, yes, Sister, he was very respectful all night. . . . And then about six o'clock in the morning we were just about dead on our feet. We knew if we went home then we'd go right to bed and never get to Mass, so we went to Mass then and there, four of us couples together. One of the girls got sick and one of the boys fell asleep, but Phil and I stuck it out. . . . Wasn't that nice, Sister, the two of us

together at Mass after the long night out. . . . And then came the long cab-drive home, alone together. . . . Oh, Sister, it was dreamy, it was divine. . . .”

An occasion such as this comes, perhaps, once in a lifetime. It is the Senior Prom—the celebration that marks the close of four years of secondary study—the “coming out” en masse from the supposed seclusion of the school to the social life of the world. Some parents and teachers seem to be about as bowled over by the glittering prestige of the hotel ballroom as the children. It is probably the expense that awes them and wins their respect. They figure there must be something good about anything that costs so much. For this reason, and since it’s “just this once” they are apt to let all the barriers down. For four years their defences have been battered by the youngsters’ systematic, methodical training for the event. Every Saturday night dance held in the school auditorium or church basement has been a rehearsal, with a growing awareness of the importance of money and of “glamour,” “charm,” “sex-appeal,” and all the other sleekly polished words that mask the corruption of the pagan world.

I’m not blaming the youngsters. Most of them aren’t bad. On the contrary, they’re amazingly, unbelievably good. This girl, for example, managed, almost miraculously, to carry out everyone’s contradictory expectations of her. She was expected to live up to her faith. She was expected to make good grades in school. She was expected to make the acquaintance of boys affluent enough to finance all that a prom entails: corsage, taxi fare, night club cover-charges, drinks and tips, and strong enough morally to withstand the calculated suggestiveness of the modern evening dress, the deliberately provocative dance-music, the relaxing effect of liquor and hours of physical contact to the rhythm of the dance. She was expected to dress, drink, and dance like a demi-mondaine, to fend off advances like an armored Joan of Arc and still keep her date eager for more of this nothing-at-all.

Let us say she managed to do it all. She satisfied the demands of her confessor, her parents, her teachers, her school mates, and her date, compromising a little all along the line, but nowhere very seriously.

Perhaps the grace of God and the efficacy of the Sacraments do enable some of our young people who walk this incredible tightrope to keep their moral balance (though I don’t see how in the world they manage to retain their sanity). But how do we, the older generation, the parents and teachers, how do we *dare* to

expect such heroic virtue from them, and at an age of highest susceptibility? How do we dare expose them to such hazards?

Part of it is due to a blind innocence on the part of many of our teachers—an innocence based on ignorance of the evil that is rampant in the world and on a preposterous nineteenth-century optimism typified by Browning's consoling line: "God's in His Heaven—all's right with the world." Part of it is due to the dualism of the religious mentality of our times, which permits us to worship God without lessening our aspirations and respect for the gifts of mammon. Part of it is due to a general feeling of helplessness in the face of a world where the vestiges of real Christian culture have practically disappeared. There was a time when we could say to our children, "don't do this," and "don't do that." There was a Christian alternative, understood and approved by the masses. Today this is no longer true. Paganism has so pervaded our society, it has so thoroughly infiltrated into every fiber of our institutions that to say "don't" is almost equivalent to saying "don't live." For our children are social beings. Up to a certain age we have absolute sway over them, but little by little their contemporaries begin to make inroads in our domain. And it is wrong to keep boys and girls from partaking in the activities of their contemporaries as long as these activities are innocent in themselves. Our problem is to see to it that they are innocent.

Some of the parents I have spoken to would welcome a change. Some of the teachers disapprove of the orgy the prom has become. Even some of the young people are disgruntled. The competitive system where grades are concerned has been extended to social life, making for snobbery, rabid individualism, and confusion, so that some girls go through school haunted by their failure to attract a date, while boys neglect their studies or ruin their health by taking night jobs in order to get enough money together to take a girl out "properly."

Nearly everyone deplores the situation. The schools blame the parents and the parents blame the schools. A few take the trouble to take corrective measures, but they feel they are struggling against an overwhelming tide and fighting a losing battle.

Before we can do anything constructive we must consider just what is amiss with an evening of recreation such as has just been described.

In mission countries the Church frequently "adopts" pagan customs, baptizing them and assimilating them into her culture for the glory of God and the edification of her children. It seems

that neo-paganism has borrowed the tactics of the Church. It smiles benevolently on Christian customs (especially Catholic ones—they have an authenticity that adds piquancy to the process) and sucks them into its orbit for the titillation of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The prom is the archetype of the poison that permeates our schools. It is completely pagan, in its means as well as in its ends. Music and dancing and drinking are the age-old accompaniments of honest merry-making. Didn't King David dance with all his might in the sight of the Lord? But the music of our proms is pagan music. Either it is utterly insipid, a set of vapid lyrics set to trite, overworked, almost machine-made tunes, or it is the dangerous, lust-provoking music of the jungle, streamlined and mated with shoddy, sex-ridden verses. The dancing is pagan. Perhaps the exhibitionism of the "jitterbug" school is less harmful—at least there's plenty of exercise there, and some show of dexterity. But most proms frown on it as "undignified" and go in for the solemn, swaying clinch that lasts for hours and hours, with only a minimum of foot technique to excuse it. The public and promiscuous petting that it signifies is but thinly veiled by the convention of the dance. The drinking is not the sacramental that may be indulged in by Christians for relaxing tension and promoting a feeling of cheer and good-fellowship. It is a serious business of numbing the senses and hardening the conscience against moral shock. It is the element that completes the vicious circle so prevalent everywhere in the pagan prescription for futile living: take one thing to get an effect, and another to deaden it. And finally, the whole purpose and aim of the prom, as it is indulged in today, is pagan. It is carried out in an atmosphere whose purpose is the gratification of the senses, the lulling of the moral sense, and consequent incitement to sin. We are cautioned by the Church to "avoid the occasion of sin," but we allow our children to organize and attend parties so deftly patterned on those of pagans that it is impossible to tell the difference between a party of Christians and a party of sinners. How pathetic is the little Catholic patch—a hymn to the Blessed Virgin!

The problem is too complex to admit of a simple sweeping solution. It has its roots in a whole series of capitulations on the part of traditional Catholicism. All the good things, the supports and props of Christian living, the helps and means leading to the blaze of glory that marks the close of a saintly life, all have suffered a sea-change into something harsh and

strange. At best they tend to become ends in themselves—all of them: health, wealth, beauty, position, marriage, education, getting and spending—and, naturally, recreation. We cannot set recreation right alone. It is too intimately tied up with the other things that go to make up living.

What are the precious things we Catholics seem to be waiting for which the sick world is hungry? One of them is our heritage of the hierarchy of values that relegates everything to its proper place in the God-given order of things. This is the touchstone that reveals the divine purpose of all creatures and all their doings.

For some time the world's philosophy of recreation was that it is a reward, to be taken moderately, for honest effort, for noble toil. Within the last half-century it has grown into a serious all-consuming pursuit. If it's a good thing, let's have more of it, let's cut down on the tedious hours of honest effort and noble toil by using labor-saving devices so that we can devote more and more time to recreation. Those who can play without having to work are applauded and envied. Above all, let golden youth have its glorious fling!

It was logical that the latter and gross perversion should stem from the former one, milder and bearing a modicum of truth. We have almost forgotten the Christian philosophy of recreation, which reminds us that because we are fallen creatures we grow tired and stale at our work. We need recreation in order to refresh us, that we may resume with new joy the work which is the means of our salvation. Knowing the needs of her children, the Church has provided them bountifully with liturgical feasts in which they may rejoice together in the glory and goodness of God. In Catholic countries whole populaces take active part in these celebrations, taking from them spiritual as well as physical refreshment. Besides these, the Church also grants that at certain stages of our work, to mark a milestone or to acknowledge a special favor from Heaven, it is fitting that we get together with our friends and rejoice with music, dancing, laughter, and communal thanksgiving.

In a few homes in this country an attempt is being made to revive the celebration of liturgical feasts. But if this practice is not also followed in the schools, the children from such homes feel that their parents are different, "queer." If the schools did not have to spend so much time keeping up with the requirements of state Regents and other qualifications demanded by the Board of Education, they might not only be able to turn out

the type of scholars they once did, they might also be able to foster the Christian culture of recreation. They could extend their teaching of the liturgy, the mysteries of our redemption, and the history of mankind through the glory of its saints, by engaging the active and wholehearted participation of the children and with them, of the entire parish, in the great feasts of the Church. After four years of such practice, perhaps the prodigality could be reclaimed from the befouling hands of the peddlers of prurience.

Outlandish? Of course such a thing is outlandish and impractical in the eyes of the average bourgeois city-dweller. He has been educated beyond that, and so have his children. They have been educated by the magazines in their parents' living rooms, by the radio and television programs they listen to with their fathers and mothers, and by the activities of the "solid citizens" their parents and teachers have consciously or subconsciously taught them to look up to—rich, successful, influential people who have made a place for themselves in the world dragging only the name of their Catholic faith with them into their heady traffic with the forces of evil. We cannot expect school parties to be Christian until we make home life and school life Christian. The school and the home have not taught children to love God and glorify Him in their work and in their play. Their education is a failure regardless of what else they learn.

Judged from this vantage-point, many of us have cause to hide our faces, plead "*mea culpa*" and do a little breast-beating together. Perhaps that would be the best way to begin.

ELAINE MALLEY



GRADUATION PROGRAM

Behave decorously,
Expound sonorously,
And after that,
Indulge uproariously.

BOOK REVIEWS

Not Revolutionary

THE APOSTOLIC PARISH

By James J. Navagh

Kenedy, \$2.75

Superficially, *The Apostolic Parish* may seem like *Revolution in a City Parish*. Father Navagh and Abbé Michonneau hold many things in common. They

both believe that a pastor should consider all people in the geographic confines of his parish as his charges, whether or not they are baptized Christians; they both think the pastor should visit his people and talk with them at every opportunity; they both are firm opposers of the custom of seat money. These—to cite a few examples—are ideas and practices they have in common. Undoubtedly, too, Father Navagh shares Abbé Michonneau's zeal and deep sincerity.

However, I am not prepared to admit that his book is the American counterpart of *Revolution in a City Parish*. Although some of the external practices and suggested remedies appear the same, Father Navagh's book is not based on the "revolution." It is parochial work along traditional lines—albeit conscientious, priestly work. Father Navagh mentions translating the Gospel and Christian teaching into the idiom of the twentieth century, but (unlike the Abbé) he does not seem to realize the importance of understanding the *mentality* of his parishioners of the twentieth century. How profoundly different in this respect the Abbé and Father Navagh are can be shown by a quotation from the latter's book:

Equally difficult is it to give an effective reply (to an excuse for missing Mass) when, for example, a tired but stubborn steel worker, sitting in his undershirt by the stove in his kitchen, and anxious to get rid of his priestly visitor, interrupts a telling syllogism right from Saint Thomas with, "What the — did the —
—— Catholic Church ever do for my family or me?"

Father Navagh counsels the priest not to be "taken aback by these people or dismayed by their attacks." He says in answering them, the first principle is to have confidence in God, the second "to have confidence in the education which the Church gave you. All reason is on your side. . . ." He does not once mention trying to find out why the steel worker says what he has said, or what has caused his attitude toward the Catholic Church, or what the problems of his life are which estrange him from the Church and from priests. Anyone who has read Abbé Michonneau's book will realize that he would look upon the case of the steel worker much differently. He is constantly stressing how the pastor must really know his people, their problems of work and of living, their mentality and their reasoning. He would never say, "All reason is on your side," but rather, "Learn to understand *their* reasoning." In fact, the education in which Father Navagh puts his confidence, the Abbé views with distrust—that is, if it has given the priest a "clerical culture" which separates him from his people and prevents him from understanding them.

Father Navagh does not appear to understand the present crisis in the temporal order, nor the role of lay Christians in temporal society. True, he does talk about Catholic Action, but his remarks about it are rather vague. In a way his book is difficult to review, for he mentions practically every apostolic group or program in existence, consequently

one cannot accuse him of ignoring them; nevertheless, he does not seem to have a clear understanding of their work or of the problems which brought them into being. Similarly, one reads along in the book and notices that Father Navagh always seems to be talking of Christianity only in terms of religious duties, and one is about to accuse him of neglecting the importance of *living* Christianity, when suddenly there is a passage, "religion must be integrated with life." However, he does not develop the idea; it is mentioned, and then dropped. The impression one gets is that Father Navagh's book is eclectic—he has taken bits from what he has heard or read, rather than making a successful synthesis of the teachings of Christ and the best in current apostolic thought, applied to conditions in the parishes of America. The ideal parish he presents would undoubtedly be efficient, wide-awake and open to new members (Father Navagh is interested in converting non-Catholics to Catholicism) but that it would be the center for a vital, apostolic Christianity capable of transforming the whole of society, I seriously doubt. This is not the program for the revolutionary restoration. Least of all is it the American adaptation of Abbé Michonneau's work. For that, we still have to work and pray. Perhaps Father Navagh's book will stimulate other priests to think and plan along these lines.

DOROTHY DOHEN

The Priest's Day

VESSEL OF CLAY
By Leo Trese
Sheed & Ward, \$2.00

I have often wondered if any priest living today would dare to drop the veil hiding his internal life from the world and allow every one to take a good long steady look into the

cosmos (or is it chaos) of his everyday thoughts and feelings.

Father Leo Trese in *Vessel of Clay* has done just this. He writes with the courage that is born of sincerity. Some may squirm as he sticks out the collective neck of the clergy in his own person, yet all must admit that the one-day sample he slices from his own life is a fair reflection of the turmoil that agitates the priestly heart in the daily struggle to give primacy to the spiritual. I speak as a fellow pastor in Christ.

Throughout the thin yet pregnant volume there runs a double undercurrent: the one, a healthy and constantly purifying self-reproach; the other, a tender regard and whole-souled "considerateness" for the forgotten "little people" of Christ's Church—the laity. Many of these find it difficult at times to reconcile the exalted dictatorial attitudes of some pastors with the more amiable Gospel ideal of the Good Shepherd. Father Trese's amazingly frank and persistent self-criticism is the direct opposite of the hush-hush attitude that surrounds the faults and failings of the clergy, both in Catholic literary circles and in the daily conversations of the faithful.

Priests may find in this manifestation of conscience a rich source of material for self-examination. Many a hint is likewise offered to seminary directors and to those responsible for the formation of the clergy in these critical times, when it becomes increasingly apparent that the toga of traditional functionary procedure (offspring of a pastoral theology labeled "no longer sufficient" by the Holy Father himself) must be shed in favor of new approaches to current problems, lest the visible Church sink

into that decline of which Cardinal Suhard wrote so forcefully and prophetically.

If one may draw a parallel: Father Trese, dealing with the personal life of the priest (himself), has accomplished, unwittingly perhaps, what the Abbé Michanneau has brought to pass in his report on the parish life at Colombes (*Revolution in a City Parish*). Between the lines he renders a humble, charitable, yet dynamically constructive criticism of the existing lethargy in the "running" of a parish.

A significant chapter is the segment entitled "10:15." Here the author unerringly places his finger upon the basic solution to the problem of building a parochial front of militant Catholic youth: a deep realization of the truth of the Mystical Body of Christ with all its implications (minus compromises) and the consequent flowering of an active liturgical (i.e., Catholic) life for the laity, resulting in the formation of the 24-hour-a-day-Christian so insistently demanded by the Holy Father for the apostolate today.

One reader offered this four-word review of Father Trese's book: He is so *honest*. . . . Need one look for more?

R. J. BARTOS, O.F.M.

Eruptive History

MEXICO: A LAND OF VOLCANOES

By J. H. Schlarman

Bruce, \$5.00

"Popular education, except in respect to religion and politeness, was forbidden by a papal bull for two

hundred years, and is now opposed by the old regime; but it is one of the vital tenets of the Constitutionalist movement."

This outrageous statement made by John Lind in an address on "The Mexican People" before the Traffic Club of Chicago in 1914, is but one of many falsehoods about Mexico which have been spread in this country, either out of deliberate malice, or, with just as dire results, out of sheer ignorance. Step by step, Bishop Schlarman puts to rout these commonly accepted fallacies and brings to the reader a vivid awareness of the real tragedy that underlies Mexico's chaotic history in an absorbing book whose clear unassuming prose, brisk pace, and penetrating character delineation make it very lively reading.

The author's montage is superb. He brings the whole world on to the stage against which he unfolds the dramatic story of Mexico. Every scene is colored, not only by a spotlight focussed on the chief protagonist, but by the lights and shadows or lightnings and thunders rising from the interplay of passion and action on the part of the supporting cast—the concerted chorus of creation.

Besides telling Mexico's story, he assumes the task of interpreting the Indo-Hispanic mentality to his compatriots. Being a Nordic himself he succeeds even better than Madariaga in translating the Iberian world into terms the Anglo-Saxon mind can grasp. He does this with great patience, stopping in his narrative from time to time to trace the development of certain customs, such as land tenure or slavery. His most engaging device is to take a situation out of its historical context and bring it into juxtaposition with a similar incident in history for comparison. His range is broad. He may draw his "foil" from the French Revolution, from pagan

Rome, or from the Old Testament. But he always succeeds in throwing new light on his material in such a way as to dispel preconceived errors and mistaken prejudices.

Seen in retrospect, what gives greatest continuity to this book in which the turning of a page may mean the final exit of one character and the entrance of a new one, is that all the way through it is a sort of palimpsest. Through the heroic march of events we get glimpses of the author steadily laboring away at the monumental task of erasing from the poor, bespattered, bespittled, besmeared face of Catholic Mexico the accumulated filth of layers of lies which are in his words, "the result of culpable ignorance or premeditated misrepresentation." Sometimes he works with a wry humor, as when he attributes the falsehoods in Neill James' book, *Dust on My Heart*, to "dust on the brain." Occasionally however, in the cleansing process, he uses caustic acids which will probably sting the sensibilities of some of our flag-waving patriots. He is not infected by that hypocritical parody of charity that pretends to see "good" in everyone, that makes no moral distinction between righteousness and rascality, that finds maudlin excuses for the most pernicious depravity. His condemnation of evil where he encounters it, is clean, forthright, and straight-from-the-shoulder.

ELAINE MALLEY

Defense of Monica Baldwin

I LEAP OVER THE WALL
By Monica Baldwin
Rinehart, \$3.50

It hadn't occurred to us to review this book until lately. When it came out we bought it, enjoyed it, and were rather interested in what the re-

viewers would say. What moves us now is the rather scornful nature of the Catholic criticism, exemplified by the announcement of a forthcoming article in *The Catholic World* called "I *didn't* leap over the wall," by Sister Disgusta.

Everyone knows by now that Monica Baldwin was a nun in a strict cloister in England for twenty-eight years, and then returned to the world early in World War II, perfectly legitimately and with the permission of the Holy See. The book is about her period of adjustment to the modern world, with a discussion of convent life by way of contrast. It is not an attack on convents, but an apology for them and for the contemplative life, written for the sophisticated, educated pagan. It is not a personal history, although her own peculiar case necessarily intrudes.

Miss Baldwin was prevented from spending her first night out of the convent at her sister's apartment in London because her sister's roommate had "a conscientious objection to people who come out of convents." This same sort of minor persecution recurs from time to time in the book, mostly coming from relatives, and treated as briefly and as charitably as possible by the author. Since her problem is not that of making any sort of adjustment, but an adjustment so difficult that it involves her whole economic, spiritual and mental well-being, this is certainly the cruelest sort of torture. Furthermore, those who have conscientious objections to people who come out of convents are being "holier than the Pope," because the Holy Father freely released Miss Baldwin. In a transitional age great charity ought to be exercised toward the many many people who cannot find, or have great difficulty finding, a place to

ake root. We Americans have lately, and quite rightly, begun to show compassion for fallen-away priests, instead of treating them as hopeless pariahs. Yet these priests, however sinned against, also sinned gravely. Monica Baldwin's case involved not the slightest moral culpability. Why, then, should she be derided?

Alongside of this general disdain one sometimes finds a little name-calling, with "crackpot," or "misfit." Now I, and most of my good friends have been called "crackpot" on so many occasions that we have begun to regard it as a compliment. A "crackpot" is someone who doesn't operate according to Wall Street business principles. A "crackpot" is a religious idealist. A "crackpot" is someone who doesn't wear lipstick. A "crackpot," above all, is anyone who is different in a society of rigorous conformists. So Monica Baldwin is a "crackpot," mostly because she has unusual ideas and finds herself in unique situations.

One other related matter that people bring up is this: if Monica Baldwin knew after ten years that she had no vocation, why did she wait eighteen more years to leave? But she answers this in the book. She didn't leave because she had made solemn perpetual vows to stay, and she didn't think the fact that she had made an awful mistake changed the situation. Then as things got harder she had great difficulty getting any authoritative advice about what to do (hence her somewhat acid remarks on Bishops and their visitations). She finally got information and petitioned to leave, because she thought her sanity was involved.

Miss Baldwin has been called snobbish, on the ground that she knew important people (her uncle is the former Prime Minister) and mentioned them, and because she made some disparaging remarks about the lower classes. Yet to me it seemed that she exemplified that sort of "classlessness" which characterizes Christianity. The unity of men in Christ, their possibility of being so united if they are not already, prevents the Christian from taking the natural inequalities of men too seriously or absolutely. They are there, but they can be transcended by love. They are useful for the functioning of the social organism, but we will be judged not by our states in life so much as on how we acquit ourselves in them. The modern secular idea of equality is quite different. Here natural inequalities are felt to be shameful. There has to be a leveling of everyone to the same mediocrity, stupidity and spiritual deadness. When Monica Baldwin came out of the convent she was sympathetic with socialism and prepared to feel warmly about the common man. She spent most of the first few years working and living with the lower classes, and she was disillusioned, not because the people were simple and ignorant, or even dirty, but because they did not love God or each other and because they resented anyone who was superior to them in any way, all this with a few exceptions. She didn't find all those wonderful traits which are supposed to characterize the common man and she said so. This is mere honesty. What she did do was work and live among them, in unbelievably awful and hard conditions. Let those who cry "snobbish" take on the lot of the poor as she did. She cannot be condemned either, in my opinion, for not having seemed one of them. Just to read books is to set yourself apart from most ordinary environments. Anyhow she was different, but she certainly shared their hardships, and she certainly didn't go about behaving like the landed gentry.

One other common criticism puzzles me. Monica Baldwin has been taken to task for indecent or immodest talk, mostly on the basis of her opening description of convent underwear (which in that convent was really archaic). It is true that she is by nature an outspoken, frank person but the implication is that her remarks are lascivious, which they certainly are not.

In New York they write about Question Mark brassieres in the sky with airplanes, and the magazines, cigarette ads, etc., etc., etc., verge on the pornographic. Yet these things go unremarked by the sort of Catholics who are offended by the frank remarks in this book. We would not believe that there was this double standard except that we have heard people who regularly subscribe to LIFE and the national women's magazines say that INTEGRITY is the sexiest magazine they have ever seen. And we are literally dumbfounded.

We hope Monica Baldwin, who writes superbly, will find her vocation as an author, and that she will use her pen tellingly in the apostolate.

CAROL JACKSON

Spiritual Guide

THE LIFE OF ABBOT MARMION

By Dom Thibaut

Herder, \$5.00

UNION WITH GOD

By Abbott Marmion

Herder, \$3.50

As time goes on, there seems to be an increase of interest in the life and writings of Abbot Columba Marmion of Maredsou. It is therefore good news that Herder has recently done a reprint of two

important books, *The Life of Abbot Marmion* by Dom Thibaut and *Union With God* by Abbot Marmion.

As confessor to Cardinal Mercier, and as Retreat Master for many communities, Abbot Marmion was known as a man of great spiritual discernment. He wrote and preached with warmth and imagination. His death in 1923 was mourned by all the Church.

The life by Dom Thibaut was first published in 1923. It is an interesting story of a life that was filled with religious activity in an interesting era. This biography lights up the volumes that Abbot Marmion wrote on the spiritual life and makes us understand the man behind the books.

Union with God is a spiritual discourse compiled from the many letters which Abbot Marmion wrote for the direction of those who sought his guidance by correspondence.

These two volumes will do much to inspire and strengthen souls who seek God and the influence of a great spiritual guide.

RT. REV. LEONARD SCHWINN, O.S.B.

OUR WRITERS

N. A. Krause is feature editor of the new SUN HERALD . . . Mrs. Stancioff is married to a Bulgarian, was brought up in England . . . We almost always get grateful mail about Dorothy Dohen's articles, showing how interested people are in lay spirituality . . . Helen Caldwell is a Negro friend of ours who wrote this article while a patient in a T.B. sanitarium . . . Elaine Malley is a Christian mother who lived in Mexico for years . . . Among our book reviewers are Father Bartos (who has a really apostolic parish in New Mexico), and Father Abbot Schwinn of the Benedictine monastery in Canon City, Colorado.